

**Council on Postsecondary Education
Committee on Equal Opportunities
June 16, 2009**

Diversity Plan Development: CEO Discussion

Based on the action plan adopted by CPE January 16, 2009, the CEO is developing a new statewide diversity plan. At the April 20 meeting of the committee, drafts of the vision, core values, and definition of diversity were submitted to the committee for discussion; no changes were suggested. In this report a draft of the proposed diversity plan mission statement is included for discussion. The committee, in collaboration with colleges and universities, is to recommend policies or changes in policy to ensure that Kentucky complies with the standards articulated by the Supreme Court in the Michigan cases *Grutter* and *Gratz*, Kentucky law, and federal law. The U. S. Supreme Court ruling in *Friends of McDonald v. Jefferson County School District* explicitly excludes postsecondary education and allows *Grutter* and *Gratz* to remain the primary law.

Four plan elements, report name, definition of diversity, vision, and core values, were shared for comment at the Council on Postsecondary Education May 22 meeting. No comments or suggestions were offered. Thus, CEO can move forward with plan development with the support of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The draft mission statement, included in this report, was developed by the diversity plan workgroup and shared with the institution presidents, legal counsels, and others for comment. The mission statement also has been shared with the CEO diversity plan legal principles committee, the plan/policy review committee, and institutional representatives. The draft statements included in this agenda item are a product of input from the above collaborators filtered through the CPE staff and institutional equal opportunity representatives' workgroup.

The information presented at the June 16 meeting is a continuation of the process of CEO seeking input from a broad array of collaborators to inform the process for developing a plan. Input received will be used to further clarify the primary plan elements, which will remain a work in progress until, to the extent possible, all collaborators have had an opportunity for input. The workgroup, responding to a strong recommendation from the conference of presidents, has endeavored to preserve/address the principal policy of The Kentucky Plan to continue to focus on access and equal opportunity for African Americans and underserved groups that have experienced historical patterns of discrimination and exclusion. The following draft elements are a consensus recommendation of the CPE staff/institutional equal opportunity representatives' workgroup and are presented for discussion.

Report Name:

Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan

Definition:

Diversity, for purposes of this plan, is an essential characteristic in building an inclusive community of people with varied human differences and world views that honor and respect those differences in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for living, learning, and working.

Vision

Postsecondary education, through its institutions, will enhance the Commonwealth by embracing, valuing, respecting, and promoting diversity and educational excellence to increase economic viability and social inclusion.

Core Values

Valuing a diverse student body, faculty, staff, administrators, and citizenry is a vital principle in the education and economic development environment of the Commonwealth. The following values shape the priorities and guide decisions in fulfilling the Commonwealth's vision of diversity.

- Value diversity as a vital component in the state's educational and economic development.
- Continue to focus on access and equal opportunity for African Americans and underserved groups that have experienced historical patterns of discrimination and exclusion.
- Respect personal uniqueness and differences.
- Encourage intellectual and creative freedom.
- Challenge stereotypes and promote awareness and inclusion.
- Prepare students to live and work in a diverse global society.
- Promote access and high expectations and support student success.
- Support community engagement, civic responsibility, and service that advance diverse and underserved population groups.
- Implement assessment and accountability measures that document the progress and outcomes of diversity efforts.
- Foster a campus climate that supports collegiality, collaboration, and civility.

Mission:

Diversity and opportunity are core values of higher education. The concept of diversity in Kentucky has broadened immensely in recent decades as demographics changed. Although the inclusive definition goes beyond race, the Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan must continue to emphasize the focus on African Americans.

To this end, the Commonwealth of Kentucky charges the Committee on Equal Opportunities with monitoring Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan implementation and equal opportunity regulations at postsecondary education institutions.

The Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Plan:

- Establishes a framework for state and institutional leadership by aligning system-wide and institutional diversity policies in order to advance strategic educational goals.
- Requires institution specific actions that provide equitable access to opportunities that students, faculty, and staff find essential for their educational and work environment.
- Conducts a qualitative and quantitative review of the educational benefit and effect of diversity.
- Holds institutions accountable for increasing the diversity of students, faculty, and staff using standards that are specific and measurable.
- Charges Kentucky postsecondary education institutions and Council on Postsecondary Education with continuous review of access and inclusion, quality of experience, preparation of students for society and the global workplace, overall institutional commitment to diversity, and addressing areas of pervasive disparities and barriers to success.

The Process:

- October 2008 CEO agrees on a broad outline to develop a diversity plan.
- November/December 2008 CPE/institutional representatives' workgroup creates a detailed outline for developing a statewide diversity plan.
- December 2008 CEO holds a special meeting to receive recommendations from the conference of president's diversity committee.
- January 6, 2009 CEO holds a special meeting to act on a recommended detailed action plan to develop a diversity plan submitted by the CPE staff/institutional equal opportunity representatives' workgroup.
- January 16, 2009 CPE accepts the detailed action plan to develop a diversity plan as recommended by the CEO.
- February 16, 2009 CEO holds its first session at which input is offered by external collaborators (The Kentucky Association of Blacks in Higher Education) and by representatives of EKU, KCTCS, KSU, MoSU, MuSU, NKU, UK, UofL, and WKU.
- March 6, 2009 a status report to CPE and request for input to clarify proposed plan development by CEO and its collaborators.
- April 1, 2009 Conference of presidents diversity committee presented their report to the conference of presidents and asked for further review, clarification, and input to guide plan development.
- April 7, 2009 Revised plan elements forwarded to the presidents, the institutional representatives, the legal counsels, the CEO legal principles committee, and the CEO plan/policy committee for review and comment.

Note: The CPE staff/institutional equal opportunity representatives' workgroup meets once each month and by conference call twice each month to discuss and revise the plan elements

in light of the information, comments, recommendations, and other data received from collaborators and constituents.

What are the next steps?

- Continue to receive input from collaborators and other constituent groups
- Report final draft of working definitions to CPE May 2009
- Report first draft of objectives and implementation strategies to CPE July 2009
- Report first draft diversity plan to CPE September 2009
- Report final draft of the diversity plan to CPE November 2009
- Submit diversity plan recommendations to CPE January 2010

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